

**DELAWARE COMMISSION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
MEETING MINUTES  
MAY 24, 2005**

Members Present: Thompson, Morris, Carroll, Ennis, Harden, Kitson, Lank, Lardizzone, Magner, Newstadt, Spitzfaden, Timberman, Wasson and Webb

Staff Present: Davila

Guests: Jack Houck (DEL VETS), Ed Moczulski (LP Lo-DEL), Dave Gillan and Frank Davidson (KWVA), Dave White (DE DOL), Ralph Hoag (VVA), and David Skocik

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to our Nations Flag.

**DAS VETERANS HOME UPDATE**

Chairman Thompson opened by announcing that the Veterans Home Steering Committee meeting set for Wednesday, May 25, 2005, has been canceled, and the next meeting will be June 8, 2005, at 2:00 PM. According to the Steering Committee, we have received final approval from the city of Milford for the Home site plan and we should be able to start construction by late June or early July. The site work and utility installation is being conducted by the city of Milford and is going very well. Revised drawings have been submitted to the Department of Veterans Affairs and should be the last major step before we get complete approval for finalizing the grant. Chairman Thompson announced that more flags are needed for the flag poles at the Northern Cemetery. Also commented on how the meeting went with the Joint Veterans Affairs Committee. Reported on the status of hiring for the Veterans Home administrator; the interviews have begun and there will be more interviews later in the month.

Mr. Gillan questioned were we stand on the selection criteria for the Home?

Chairman Thompson responded by saying that as far as updating the rules, they are waiting for the administrator to be hired.

Mr. Davila clarified the wording of the facility; it will be a Long Term Care Facility. It will have multiple kinds of service, such as nursing home care, domiciliary care, and dementia care.

Mr. Davidson announced that HB 129 is still alive and encourages everyone to contact their Representatives and Senators to get some support behind this bill.

Mr. Skocik proposes that a Hero Scholarship Fund be named in honor of all those who have fallen since the War on Terror and discussed the aspects of that fund.

**MOTION BY HARDEN TO ACCEPT APRIL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES, SECONDED BY CARROLL, MOTION CARRIED.**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**CEMETERY COMMITTEE**

Commissioner Newstadt reported that the Family Advisory Cemetery Committee in Sussex County met on May 17, 2005, and the Commission was well represented. There was a general review of where the Cemetery is going and the Commission's priorities.

**COMMEMORATIVE AFFAIRS**

Commissioner Kitson reported that past Commander-in-Chief Paul Spera will be the guest speaker at the Memorial Day Ceremony at the Bridge, on May 30, 2005. Commissioner Newstadt reported that later that day at 2:00 PM, there will be a Ceremony at the Northern Cemetery as well. Also on June 14, 2005, 2:00 PM, there will be a Flag Day Ceremony at the Southern Cemetery, which will be a joint presentation by JWV and KWVA.

## **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

Commissioner Carroll expressed his concern about the practice of not using liners in the retainer ponds at the new Veterans Home and whether or not the ponds will retain water without them. There was discussion about the ponds.

## **LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS**

Commissioner Lardizzone reported that he has looked into the matter of a bus coming to the new Veterans Home. According to his conversation with Representatives Cathcart and Ennis and Senator Bunting, we could possibly get it through a program with DART.

## **PERSONNEL**

No report.

## **GROUND BREAKING & DEDICATION**

Commissioner Morris reported that Keith Warren, Governor's Office, will be handling the invitations, the National Anthem, all media contacts and news releases that will go out prior to the event. Milford will provide a stage, sound equipment, portable restrooms, and traffic control. The shovels are in and painted and we have 1000 commemorative pins. We have ordered a large tent for inclement weather, 400 seats, and a small tent for refreshments.

## **MONUMENTS & MEMORIALS**

No report.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS**

Newstadt (JWV) – On May 6, 2005, he attended the Air Force Association Annual Salute to Aviation at Wilmington College. On May 7, 2005, he attended the Delaware Reserve Offices Association's Convention in Dover. On May 12, 2005, he attended the MOAA luncheon. There was discussion about the WWII History Program. On May 22, 2005, the JWV of Delaware held their annual installation luncheon. He also attended a dinner meeting of the Shield and Square.

Spitzfaden (MOAA) – Attended local chapter meeting on May 21, 2005, and he has a check for the Veterans Day Fund from the Dover Chapter of MOAA.

Wasson (DELVETS) – Discussed the renovations to Post 1 in Wilmington.

Harden (WAVES Nat'l) – She will attend the WAVES meeting this Saturday. She attended the Women Veterans Symposium on April 30, 2005.

Webb (VVA) – Questioned why a member of the Northern Cemetery Committee was excused and asked to be removed from that Committee as well.

Kitson (VFW) – VFW State Convention is June 10-11, 2005.

Morris (American Legion) – The State Convention is in June and then the National Convention will be in Hawaii.

Thompson (MCL) – Due to the State holiday and Memorial Day being on the same day, the MCL will be holding its 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Memorial Day Ceremony as a pre-Memorial Day Ceremony on May 29, 2005, 9:00 AM, at the Sharon Hills Cemetery.

Lardizzone (DAV) – DAV Convention will be June 24-25, 2005, and they will present a plaque to the winner of the Jessie Brown Youth Scholarship.

Carroll – (MOPH) – The unit participated in the VA Carnival, as well as the Newark Memorial Day Parade. The annual Convention will be on June 18, 2005, 11:00 AM–3:00 PM, at the Dover AFB Museum.

Magner (AMVETS) – AMVETS will be having their State Convention on June 25, 2005, in Angola. Although AMVETS colors were not present at the Newark Parade, some of our members were there with other organizations.

Ennis (KWVA) – He has been out ill and wanted to thank everyone for the cards, phone calls and emails. Mr. Gillan reported that the KWVA participated at the VA Patient Carnival; they were in the Newark Parade, and also part of the Firing Team. They also had the Firing Team at Chrysler to help AMVETS with a dedication. They were also at Bear Cemetery putting flags out and at the Evangelical Presbyterian Church for a military musical program. They will be at the Bridge, the Wilmington Parade, and the Milford Parade on the same day. They will attend the Korean community event at Delview Park.

Lank (MOWW) – The MOWW National Convention will be at the Hyatt Regency in San Francisco, August 4-7, 2005. They are currently looking for a speaker for the Veterans Day Ceremony at the Bridge.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Commissioner Carroll announced the total amount in the Veterans Day Home Fund is currently \$147,036.49. Mr. Davila reminded everyone that about \$138,000 of that went towards the Veterans Home to get the federal match. Commissioner Morris asked if we had heard anything back from Comcast about the Pentagon Channel. Mr. Davila confirmed we had not. Commissioner Morris reported that he is still working on the E-Z Pass consideration for veterans' organizations that transport veterans.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

**MOTION BY ENNIS FOR THE COMMISSION TO ENDORSE THE PROPOSED HERO SCHOLARSHIP FUND, SECONDED BY MORRIS, MOTION CARRIED.**

Discussion followed the motion and a vote was taken.

#### **ITEMS FOR THE GOOD AND WELFARE OF THE ORGANIZATION**

Commissioner Newstadt expressed his concerns about the closing of the Air National Guard Base in New Castle and urged each Commissioner to contact their representatives and express their concerns about the closing of this base. Discussion followed.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING: JUNE 21, 2005 (11:00 AM)**

**LOCATION: Robbins Bldg, 802 Silver Lake Blvd, Suite 100  
Dover, DE**

**ADJOURNED**